

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**

**MONDAY 8TH JANUARY 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL**

## Present: Councillors S Collinson (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, T Bennett, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson, D Peters, B Piper, A Presswell, N Roberts and L Smallridge.

Apologies: Cllrs Allen, Chinnock, Hannam and Price.

## In Attendance: Members of the press and public, DCllr Birch, C Marlton (Town Clerk) and P Bethel (Town Sergeant).

### **1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING**

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council. The Mayor will request confirmation that all Members have completed or made any necessary amendments to their Declaration of Interests.**

The apologies were received and agreed unanimously. There were no updates to declarations of interest.

***The Committee will adjourn for the following items:***

**Reports from County and District Councillors.**

1. **County Cllr Hodgson**
2. **District Cllr Allen**
3. **District Cllr Birch**
4. **District Cllr Presswell**

*It was* ***RESOLVED*** *to suspend standing orders.*

a. County Cllr (C Cllr) Hodgson updated on: the financial position of Devon County Council; recycling centres now accepting capped amounts of DIY waste with charge; and ongoing contact with Devon Highways officers about the problems of vehicle height and width in Castle Street. She advocated for the inclusion of funding for TRAYE projects in the budget, and it was explained that this will form part of the allocation of funds under the Community Outreach budget which will be carried out once Council has agreed its Strategic Plan.

b. District Cllr Allen was not present and had not circulated a report.

c. District Cllr Birch had submitted a report and took questions about: the monitoring of waste and recycling facilities in Longmarsh car park to provide for overnight motor home users; the financial borrowing power of South Hams District Council linked to the Freeport; and offered to set up a meeting with the Dartington Trust for Councillors.

d. District Cllr Presswell had circulated a report and updated on: responsibility for the Leechwell; and NHS dentists.

*The Council reconvened.*

**3. CLERK’S REPORT (Standing Item)**

**To note the Clerk's Report for December 2023 (general updates and correspondence).**

Noted.

### **4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve and sign the minutes of the following Meeting:**

***(Please note confidential minutes can be agreed but any discussion must be held in Part 2)***

**a. Full Council 4th December 2023.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve and sign the minutes.

**To note the following minutes:**

**b.** **Council Matters Committee 11th December 2023.**

Noted.

**c. Planning Committee 18th December 2023.**

Noted.

### **5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS ARISING**

**To consider any matters arising from the Minutes and to approve any recommendations from Committees:**

***(Please note confidential minutes can be agreed but any discussion must be held in Part 2)***

**a. Full Council 4th December 2023.**

No matters arising.

**b. Council Matters Committee 11th December 2023.**

Item 4. Draft Budget 2024/25 – to be considered under Full Council item 6.

**c. Planning Committee 18th December 2023.**

No recommendations.

**6. DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25**

**To consider a draft budget set the precept for 2024/25.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the recommendations from the December Council Matters Committee (subject to minor amendments as the tax base figures are now available):

1. Precept for 2024/25 is set at £656,022 (a 7.5 percent increase to the budget, actual increase of 6.54 percent to the taxpayer).
2. That the budget for 2024/25 is ratified as presented. This includes significant savings on the staffing structure, Visit Totnes work, Civic budget and Mayoral allowance.
3. Anticipated spend from Reserve in 2024/25 is set at about £120,000.

**7. TAX BASE FOR 2024/25**

**To note the tax base for financial year 2024/25.**

Noted

**8. ISRAEL – GAZA WAR**

**To consider the following motion: That Totnes Town Council calls for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that Totnes Town Council:

* Calls for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, as outlined in the open letter; and
* Forwards this letter to the Prime Minister, Leaders of the Opposition, Totnes Times and place it on the Town Council website.

**9. LIST OF MEETING DATES** **AND COMMUNICATIONS POINTS**

**To note a list of upcoming meeting dates, including a revised calendar of meeting dates, and Council communications points.**

Noted.

### **10. NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting date of Monday 5th February 2024, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

*The Council will be asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public “by reason of the confidential nature of the business” to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.*

### **11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)**

**To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature.**

No recommendations.

### **12. EASTGATE LEASE**

**To consider an update and wording of the Eastgate lease (legal).**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve a new 5 year (back dated) lease with the exclusion clause requested by the Duke of Somerset’s office. It was noted that this clause was not in the previous lease and that protections from the Landlord/Tenant Act are therefore removed.

### **13. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)**

**To consider any update on the Elmhirst Site project (commercially sensitive).**

No further updates to report.

Cllr Sarah Collinson

Chair